



## **Cognitive Therapy for Primary Obsessions**

### **November 3**

Exposure and response prevention are first-line behavioural strategies for treating OCD based on decades of research. These strategies are not clearly applicable in the case of individuals with primary obsessions, which typically involve obsessions with repugnant, immoral, or socially objectionable themes that are strongly resisted but do not generally give rise to prominent overt compulsions. Cognitive approaches offer a theoretically coherent and evidence-based set of tools for treating these obsessions.

#### **Overview**

Cognitive theories of obsessions focus on meta-cognition about the personal meaning of the occurrence of unwanted thoughts. Although most people acknowledge having abhorrent unwanted thoughts on occasion, problems occur when these thoughts are interpreted as indicating something personally significant, such as “Having this thought means I am dangerous.” Dr. Woody will begin the workshop by describing in detail the theoretical foundation of CBT for obsessions. She will then outline the results of a recent randomized controlled trial of primary obsessions demonstrating the efficacy of a treatment approach based on this theory. Most of the workshop will be focused on the details of strategies for shifting personally significant appraisals of unwanted intrusive thoughts.

#### **Specifically, workshop participants will learn to:**

1. Conceptualize primary obsessions from a meta cognitive perspective, distinguishing the intrusive thought from appraisals about it, and articulate problematic appraisals commonly encountered among clients with this problem.
2. Use a variety of behavioural experiments to facilitate shifts in appraisals about unwanted intrusive thoughts.
3. Guide clients to change safety behaviour that serves to maintain maladaptive appraisals, including concealment, avoidance, and thought suppression.

## **Transdiagnostic Approaches to CBT for Anxiety Disorders**

### **November 4**

Numerous treatments have been developed for adult anxiety disorders. Evidence-based approaches largely rely on cognitive and behavioural principles and procedures as applied to specific phenomenology for each disorder. Interest in developing transdiagnostic or unified approaches to treating anxiety has burgeoned due to the high degree of comorbidity among these disorders as well as the practical constraints of learning and applying single-disorder protocols.

In this workshop, Dr. Woody will briefly review the evidence base supporting a variety of specific CBT techniques with different anxiety disorders and illustrate commonalities among these approaches. She will also provide an overview of the emerging evidence regarding unified protocols for treatment of anxiety. She will structure the workshop around technique-oriented principles that cut across protocols, focusing on correction of faulty appraisals, the utility and flexibility of behavioural experiments, effective use of exposure exercises, detection and elimination of avoidance and other safety behaviours, and improving skills for handling feared situations. Finally, she will point to important factors in anxiety treatment that have typically been neglected in single-disorder protocols, such as motivation and readiness for change, family and social network, and realistic stresses and triggers.

**Extensive handouts will be provided to help participants with case conceptualization.**

**The workshops will take place from 9:00-16:30**

